THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI KASHIRAM RANA): (a) and (b) Based on the information furnished by the State Government concerned, the turnover of the Handloom Corporations of the States of Orissa and Madhya Pradesh has declined from the year 1994-95 to 1997-98 by about 64% and 43% respectively while the turnover of the Handloom Corporation of Gujarat has increased from the year 1994-95 to 1997-98 by about 31%. The performance of the State Handloom Corporations is monitored by the State Governments concerned. However, the possible reasons for decline in turnover may include inter-alia, inadequate measures taken by the State Corporations towards diversification of the products, development of value added product range.

(c) and (d) A Committee constituted in the year 1991, to review the Janata Cloth Scheme, observed that it has contributed to the de-skilling of the weavers by producing cloth of low unit value and therefore, recommended phasing out of the scheme. The Government after examining the recommendations of this Committee, introduced Package-II under Janata Cloth Scheme in the year 1993-94 with the objective of enabling handloom weavers to graduate to production of higher value textile goods and to provide alternate employment to handloom weavers displaced on account of phasing out of Janata Cloth Scheme and also decided to phase out the scheme by 1996-97. The Government, however, extended the scheme for the year 1997-98 so as to facilitate the transition.

(e) To deal with the issues of the Handloom Sector, periodic reviews are undertaken from time to time by the Government of India.

Upgradation of Garment Technology

*214. SHRI GOPALSINH G. SOLANKI: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any representation from the representatives of garment and textile industry for Rs. 2000 crores to upgrade its technology and improve competitiveness in the global market;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) Government's action thereon;

(d) whether any Committee has been set up to look into the improvement of the textile industry; and

(e) is so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI KASHIRAM RANA): (a) to (c) The garment export industry has represented for the creation of a fund to enable the industry to avail of soft loans for modernisation.

A proposal is under formulation to facilitate modernisation, through technological upgradation, of the textile industry. The intended objective is to improve production and productivity of the Indian textile industry to make it more competitive. Details of a Technology Upgradation Fund Scheme for the textiles sector are being worked out.

(d) and (e) It has been decided to set up an expert group under the Chairmanship of Shri S.R. Sathyam for the purpose of enabling the formulation of a new textile policy. The composition and the terms of reference are under finalisation.

Sick NTC Mills

*215. SHRI GOVINDRAO ADIK: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have offered sick National Textiles Corporation (NTC) mills to the State Government;

(b) if so, the details of the proposal made to the State Governments and the reaction/response of the State Governments thereto, particularly that of Maharashtra;